



# NEWS RELEASE

**Today's Date:** Wednesday, March 16, 2011  
**District:** District 2 - Redding  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MIDDLE OF BUCKHORN PROJECT BEGINS THIS SPRING

REDDING – The California Department of Transportation will begin construction this spring on the first in a series of projects which will straighten curves and add a truck climbing lane on State Route 299 west of Redding. The Middle of Buckhorn project is expected to go to bid in April, 2011, with construction start anticipated in mid to late June. Vegetation removal is nearly complete for this project east of Buckhorn Summit between post miles 2.5 and 4.3. This two season project will run through the fall, going into “winter suspension” around November, 2011, and resume in the spring of 2012. Completion is anticipated in the fall of 2012.

The Middle of Buckhorn, an estimated \$15 million safety project funded through the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), is designed to reduce the number and severity of accidents and includes improvements to 17 curves in this almost two mile stretch of State Route 299. The project will:

- Entirely eliminate seven of the 17 curves
- Add a continuous two-mile, straighter truck climbing lane that will allow for safer passing opportunities
- Add a four-foot wide “soft median” between opposing lanes of traffic
- Add shoulders and improve the clear recovery zone
- Increase the advisory curve speed limit from 25 mph to 35 mph
- Eliminate 18 STAA (Surface Transportation Assistance Act) truck restrictions

Impacts to traffic will include one-way traffic control with up to 20 minute delays during the daytime, Monday through Friday.

The next project, Twin Gulches, will begin immediately following this project at the end of the 2012 construction season. Twin Gulches will address two hairpin turns between post miles 4.3 and 5.5. Beginning in 2013, realignment of the remaining curves between a section completed in 2009 and the Middle of Buckhorn project will begin.

At the completion of the last project, Caltrans will have finished seven years of major construction projects on the seven-mile stretch of the Buckhorn Grade and the entire route will look similar to completed Top of Buckhorn project. All five projects will have addressed the STAA issues for truck traffic, making the entire 299 corridor STAA compatible for large trucks to travel from the valley to the Humboldt coast. The Humboldt Transportation Commission has been successful in obtaining High Priority Project (HPP) funds from the Federal SAFETEA LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users) program to help pay for projects at locations along State Route 299 with STAA restrictions. Allowing these types of trucks is important to the economy of the Humboldt area and the needs of the deep water port in Eureka, CA.

For more information please contact Denise Yergenson at 530-225-3260.

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